

Connecticut State Police
T I P S
Topics in Public Safety

CHILDREN'S SAFETY

Parents and children should be educated about the dangers that exist in the ever-changing environment of children. Although the term of "stranger danger" has been widely used to teach children about the dangers of coming into contact with a "strange" person or a person unknown to the child, the term may be outdated.

The threat to children doesn't always come from "strange" people or strangers. More often than not, children are victimized by someone they know. Abusers of children can come from within their own family/social circle or from a stranger that preys upon an opportunity to abuse a child. It is the responsibility of parents and caregivers to protect the innocence of children from hazardous situations.

Working together, parents and children can avoid dangerous situations. Parents are encouraged to explain to their children the difference between bad contact and appropriate contact with persons they know or those considered "strangers." Parents can, without instilling more fear than needed, periodically review "safety rules" and teach their children to use their instincts to know when something is wrong.

The following tips may help parents establish some new "safety rules":

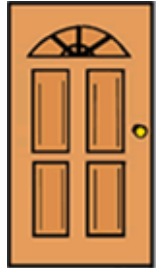
Advice for parents

- Have a frank discussion with your children about safety and quiz them afterward. Clarify or correct any misunderstandings.
- Never leave your children alone in a public place.
- Always accompany your child when using a public restroom.

- Make sure your children know how to get help. They should know their name, address and phone number, as well as their parents' first and last names; how to dial 911; and who is authorized to pick them up from school or activities.
- It is against Connecticut law to leave a child alone in a car.

Children should **NEVER**:

- Accept a ride from a stranger, even if he/she offers money or candy, or says that a parent said it was okay to ride with him/her.
- Answer the door or the phone if they are home alone. Never tell anyone that they are home alone.
- Leave their own home without telling a parent.
- Invite anyone into their home without permission of a parent.
- Play in abandoned buildings or in isolated areas.
- Hitchhike.
- Do anything at the request of another person who gives them an "icky" or uneasy feeling.



In addition, children should:

- Scream, punch and throw objects to gain attention if someone tries to force them toward a building or a car.
- Stay with parents when in a public place.
- Say "no" to anyone who wants them to do something they've been taught is wrong.
- Find a cashier, store employee or security guard if they get lost in a store and ask them for help.
- Tell a trusted adult if another person hits or touches them inappropriately or exposes private parts.
- Know when and how to call 911.



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